Aboriginal AWARENESS Workshop

British Columbia Region Module

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This document is not intended to be the definitive historical or cultural account of events, but rather to provide some background information. The research and writing were undertaken by an Aboriginal contractor on behalf of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the interpretation of events and views expressed herein should not be regarded as necessarily those of the department. Although every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, currency and reliability of the content, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada accepts no responsibility in that regard.

Published under the authority of the
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development,
Ottawa, 1999

QS-3608-009-EE-A1
Catalogue No. R41-6/19-1999E
ISBN 0-662-27814-3

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Services Canada

La présente publication est également disponible en français
sous le titre :

Module de la région de la Colombie-Britannique / Atelier de sensibilisation aux cultures autochtones

102-03431/

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Before *You* Start...

This regional module will provide participants and the facilitator with insight into the general issues facing Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia. It should be presented by speakers from the host community or region; however, this text can be used to present the unit if speakers are unavailable.

Some of the information highlighted in the Current Activity section was taken from materials available at the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development's (DIAND) Information Kiosk. Speakers may find it useful to address how some of the initiatives described in this section are developing in the host community.

This module is one of nine, each one corresponding to a different region: Alberta, the Atlantic, Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Yukon, and British Columbia.

Heredity and wealth determined status and rank. Those with formal titles or who were descended from prestigious families wielded more power.

Statistical Overview of Aboriginal Peoples in British Columbia

- 199 First Nations
- 106,370 Status Indians
- 22,295 Métis people
- 274,741 Non-Status Indians

British Columbia has a large, culturally diverse and geographically dispersed Aboriginal population. It's home to 17 percent of Canada's Aboriginal population—33 percent of all First Nations. The province is home to 1,650 of Canada's 2,300 First Nation communities. Most are small compared to those in the rest of Canada. About 54 percent of the province's Status Indians live in First Nation communities.

General Overview

This module introduces participants to the Aboriginal peoples of British Columbia, and suggests topics and issues for discussion. Keep in mind, this is only a brief summary of key issues.

Historical Background

The earliest Aboriginal settlements along the coast and interior valleys of British Columbia were likely established 8000-10000 years ago. These Aboriginal societies espoused a culture based on hunting, fishing and gathering. Game was plentiful; deer, bear, elk, mountain sheep and other small animals provided food and skins. Along the coast, people also hunted sea mammals (seals, porpoises, sea otters and whales). They gathered shellfish, wild fruits and berries, and root crops. But the single most important resource was the Pacific salmon.

Before they were displaced by Euro-Canadian settlers, British Columbia's Aboriginal people settled in semi-permanent communities along the coast and along rivers in the interior. They lived where they had easy access to fish, especially salmon. Small groups often lived and traveled together during the spring, summer and fall. As winter approached, groups would join together to live in large permanent villages. Housing consisted mainly of huge post-and-beam lodges covered with split cedar planks, and insulated with cedar bark and rushes. These lodges were ideal to withstand winter's cold, and to host feasts and ceremonies.

Although social and political organizations varied, most West Coast Aboriginal cultures shared certain characteristics. The division of labour was complementary and co-operative. Men were largely responsible for hunting and fishing; women prepared meals and preserved food for winter (for example, smoking salmon). Men and women gathered plants and made tools and implements for daily use. Men fashioned tools from stone, wood and shells; women would spin and weave to make everything from fish nets and baskets to elaborately decorated mats, clothing and blankets of cedar bark, wool and fur.

The primary social unit was a large family group of several small bands descended from a common ancestor. In the north, matrilineal membership was prevalent; in the south, descent was traced through either male or

female lines. Most groups joined larger tribal units and lived communally under the leadership of several headmen or chiefs.

Most societies established a social hierarchy and a system to rank its members. In some, each person was assigned a specific rank; others were more flexible.

Heredity and wealth determined status and rank. Those with formal titles or who were descended from prestigious families wielded more power. And although most land and waters were open to general use, the more productive fishing, hunting and harvesting sites were often privately owned: those who managed these resources well earned respect and esteem as a result. High-ranking individuals had special rights: they could use certain ritual carvings or paintings, hold certain titles and perform particular dances.

It's important to note here that private "ownership" of valuable sites by titled individuals denoted authority, respect and responsibility rather than possession. While tribal members had to get permission to fish or hunt on "private" property, this permission was invariably given.

In traditional Aboriginal cultures, the physical and spiritual worlds were sacred. Religious ceremonies were held throughout the year to celebrate their spiritual relationship with nature and to secure supernatural help for successful fishing and hunting. They believed in life after death and placated potentially harmful ghosts with special rituals. The Shaman (medicine men) were endowed with special abilities to communicate with spirit forces and cure illnesses. Singing, dancing and the decorative arts (wood sculpture, painting, masks, totem poles) were created to respond to their sense of the interrelatedness of the sacred and secular worlds. But with the arrival of the first Spanish and British explorers in the late 18th century, that world changed and their sense of belonging diminished.

The Potlatch Ceremony

The Potlatch ceremony illustrates well the importance of sharing and giving. It's all the more interesting because it not only served as the cultural backbone that supported the entire network of the Northwest Coast Aboriginal peoples—it was officially banned between 1884 and 1951.

Potlatch means "giving" in Chinook*. A potlatch was hosted by high-ranking Chiefs to celebrate important public events such as initiation, marriage, the investiture or death of a Chief, or the raising of a totem pole. Guests were

* A pidgin, based largely on Nootka, Lower Chinook, French and English and once used as a commercial tongue from California to Alaska in the 18th Century.

seated according to their status, and were honoured and given gifts equal to their prestige.

The ceremony was elaborate, and lasted anywhere from a day to several weeks. It involved feasts, spirit dancing (*tamanwas*) and theatrical performances. The host chieftain distributed some of his wealth in the form of gifts (beautifully carved bowls and spoons, furs, rare shells, woven blankets, canoes, slaves) to reaffirm his own hereditary rights and privileges.

Potlaches were often held to help a neighbouring tribe experiencing a misfortune. This led to a series of reciprocal exchanges, each chief desiring to repay—with interest—the gifts and honours received. Though wealth and status were valued, it was more important to give than to receive.

Contact With Europeans

About 5,000 years ago, identifiable Aboriginal settlements emerged and complex cultures developed in all areas of British Columbia.

Just as we have learned that there were visitors to North America's east coast before Columbus, there are increasing suspicions that the West Coast may also have had earlier non-Aboriginal contact. Evidence includes very old burial grounds that appear to be for Caucasian people, and "Yellowhead Highway," the name of a road in the province's interior, which some believe to be named for a group of fair-haired Aboriginal people. These people may perhaps be descended from a different origin than that which is traditionally adhered to, but research into this area is by no means complete.

By the 1700s, just before the arrival of the first Europeans, relatively large Aboriginal groups had settled throughout the province. Fourteen tribes, with as many as 25,000 members, lived in the northeast and central regions. Another five tribes, with 10,000 members, lived in the southeastern plateau. Seven tribes—about 70,000 people—lived on the coast. In fact, about 40 percent of the total Aboriginal population of Canada, at the time, lived within the present boundaries of British Columbia.

European contact brought the fur trade. This increased the wealth of some Aboriginal societies, and strengthened existing social and economic systems. But it also brought disease, firearms and alcohol. By 1835, the Aboriginal population dropped from 100,000 to 70,000. By 1885, it was down to 28,000; in 1929, there were only 22,000. (Only after 1939 did Aboriginal populations start to climb rapidly in all parts of the province.)

In 1849, the British government established Vancouver Island as a colony to encourage settlement and confirm its sovereignty. As the demand for land

increased, the government had to set policies to establish ownership. The Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at the time, James Douglas, recognized that while land title was held by the Crown, First Nations should continue to be able to use it, to a certain extent. Between 1850 and 1854, he negotiated 14 treaties covering a small part of southern Vancouver Island.

On the mainland, the colonial government allotted reserve lands without treaties. Only one other treaty was negotiated in British Columbia, in 1899; it involved five First Nations in the Peace River area.

When British Columbia joined Canada in 1871, jurisdiction over Aboriginal affairs was passed to Ottawa. Managing reserve lands became the Government of Canada's responsibility.

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Historical Summary and Cultural Change

The fur traders were the first to follow the explorers, and to take advantage of B.C.'s natural resources. Aboriginal groups welcomed the visitors and eagerly adopted such European goods as firearms and metal implements. Until the middle of the 19th century, when the Hudson's Bay Company established permanent trading posts, they were treated as important allies and friends of the colonial administration. But with the discovery of gold on the Fraser River in 1857, a large wave of fortune seekers and settlers descended. They initiated the heated controversy over land title that persists to this day.

According to Britain's Royal Proclamation of 1763, land title belongs to Aboriginal peoples by right of prior occupancy. In order to extinguish this title, British policy has been to negotiate its transfer to the Crown. Aboriginal groups were treated as sovereign nations and guaranteed certain rights and privileges, as well as reserve lands in return for relinquishing their title.

Conflict Over Land

The government of James Douglas recognized the growing Aboriginal resentment as white settlement increased. It attempted to restore peace by working out a policy of Aboriginal rights based on the British treaty system. But, except for those signed with Aboriginal villages on Vancouver Island, no

treaties were ever signed with British Columbia's Aboriginal peoples. Instead, the government set up many small, scattered First Nation communities and forced Aboriginal people to live there.

Aboriginal affairs policy, until very recently, has been primarily one of enforced acculturation and assimilation. Superior and paternalistic attitudes—expressed by missionaries, administrators and settlers alike—were based on the belief that Aboriginal cultures were primitive and destined to disappear.

Euro-Canadians denied the validity of Aboriginal entitlement to land. Why? They believed that Aboriginal peoples couldn't profit from the land anyway, so why not provide small tracts of reserve land where they could adapt to the new order without obstructing economic development?

It didn't take long for Aboriginal people to learn the importance and effectiveness of organized protest. Ironically, Aboriginal groups adopted the tools and methods of Euro-Canadian society to protect and preserve their traditional ways of life.

In response to repeated protests over the poor and inadequate Aboriginal policies of the provincial government, a Dominion-order in-council was passed in 1873. It recommended that no less than 32.38 hectares of land be allotted to each Aboriginal family of five. Provincial authorities insisted that 8.094 hectares were enough, and refused to comply with the order-in-council. Relations between Aboriginal peoples, the settlers and both levels of government grew increasingly strained.

In 1887, the province denied the existence of Aboriginal title and the need to negotiate treaties to extinguish it. By this time, access to traditional sources of livelihood—fish, furs and wild vegetation—was severely limited. Though many Aboriginal people worked as seasonal labourers, boatmen and servants, most communities experienced poverty and despair.

In 1906, a delegation of three Chiefs traveled to England to petition King Edward VII about Aboriginal title and rights. In 1909, an organization called the Indian Tribes of the Province of British Columbia was formed to document First Nation grievances and propose solutions. Educated Aboriginal leaders were emerging and learning how to advance their claims through the legal system. A Joint Royal Commission on Indian Affairs in British Columbia was appointed and sat from 1912 to 1916. At the same time, the Allied Tribes of British Columbia came together to pursue the issue of Aboriginal title claims.

Political agitation continued until it reached a peak in 1927, when the Allied Tribes presented their case before a Special Joint Commission of Parliament. The Commission decided that Aboriginal groups had no legal claim; they were told to stop protesting and accept $100,000 a year in lieu of treaty

money. Aboriginal leaders saw the decision as a failure. It led to the collapse of the Allied Tribes organization.

Down, but not out, Aboriginal groups continued to meet to discuss common problems and, in 1930, formed the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia. This group focused on improving the status of Aboriginal people within the Euro-Canadian social system. They called attention to Aboriginal poverty, unemployment, education needs, and to the growing restrictions on hunting, trapping, fishing and lumbering.

In 1936, the Pacific Coast Native Fishermen Association was formed in response to limits being set on Aboriginal participation in the fishing industry. In 1942, it joined with the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia. Since then, Aboriginal groups have become increasingly strong advocates of rights and land claims settlements for all of Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

Potlatch Outlawed

As the land claims controversy raged, the Canadian government dealt a major blow to Aboriginal cultural identity, as well. In 1884, the *Indian Act* was amended to prohibit hosting or participating in a Potlatch ceremony, which were deemed to be debaucheries of the worst kind, and the source of Aboriginal depravity, spawning such vices as indigence, thriftlessness, intemperance, prostitution and roaming habits.

Just as the Christian work ethic appeared to justify the displacement of the "unambiguous, unproductive" Aboriginal populations, so too it seemed to justify the denial of their cultural identity. Euro-Canadian society thought this was the only charitable method by which to "civilize" and "improve" Aboriginal peoples.

The Potlatch ceremony's legal prohibition remained on the Canadian statutes until the *Indian Act* was revised in 1951. Aboriginal groups were not alone in their objections to it; many questioned its moral basis. Although enforcement was generally lenient (though not always), it became a focal point for a growing sense of injustice. Out of this has emerged a deeply rooted sense of betrayal and injustice which is now propelling a strong Aboriginal rights movement toward cultural, economic and political self-determination.

The Potlatch ceremony illustrates well the importance of sharing and giving.

The Aboriginal Peoples of British Columbia

Status Indians in British Columbia generally leave their First Nation communities to find work or escape crowded housing conditions and social distress. As a result, they lose benefits from DIAND—including social assistance, housing and tax concessions.

There are many First Nations and small communities in British Columbia. This is due to the mountainous geography. Early Aboriginal settlements were located in valleys, estuaries and plains—small land areas scattered across the province, usually near water. Settlers competed for the same areas, and this led to the allocation of reserves that are much smaller than those in the rest of Canada.

Those who live outside First Nation communities are eligible for the same programs and benefits as all British Columbians, many of which are unavailable to those who choose to remain in the First Nations community. And therein lies the paradox of Aboriginal life in British Columbia: the First Nation community is home, but there isn't any work there.

Language and Organization

There are 10 major Aboriginal groups in British Columbia, classified by language:

Athapaskan	central and northeast
Inland Tlingit	West Coast
Haida	West Coast
Tsimshian	West Coast
Kwakuitl	West Coast
Nootka	West Coast
Bella Coola	West Coast
Coast Salish	West Coast
Interior Salish	southeast
Kootenay	southeast

Tribal councils have recently formed to deal more effectively with administrative, political and land use issues. There are 33 tribal councils in British Columbia.

Diversity

The Athapaskan, Interior Salish and Kootenay groups belong to the Plateau culture area. They live between the coastal range of mountains and the Rockies.

The vast majority of B.C.'s Aboriginal peoples live along the coast, the Tsimshian, just south of the Tlingit near the Nass and Skeena rivers; the Haida, in the Queen Charlotte Islands; the Bella Coola, south of Tsimshian; the Kwakuitl, in the northern part of Vancouver Island and that facing mainland; the Nootka, along the west coast of Vancouver Island; and the Coast Salish, in the southeastern part of Vancouver Island and that facing mainland.

Only incomplete records exist to portray what traditional Aboriginal cultures were like before contact. What we know, we've learned from studies conducted in the late 19th century, long after dramatic changes had already occurred. So we can only talk about pre-contact life in fairly general terms.

By the 1700s, just before the arrival of the first Europeans, relatively large Aboriginal groups had settled throughout the province. In fact, about 40 percent of the total Aboriginal population of Canada, at the time, lived within the present boundaries of British Columbia.

Regional Concerns

Aboriginal Fisheries and Rights

The issue of fisheries resource management is an extremely important and complex one. For most B.C. Aboriginal groups, fishing has been and continues to be central to their economic well-being. In fact, it has inspired much of the art, ceremonies and myths of their rich cultural heritage. Salmon played the most important role in this respect, but other species—including eulachon, herring, herring roe, halibut, cod, clams, oysters and abalone—were also used.

"Settled" But Not Employed

In the late 19th century, many Aboriginal men and women adapted to modern fishing and canning technologies. By 1919, the majority of the employees in the 97 coastal canneries—and more than one third of the fishermen—were Aboriginal people. Initially, this was an ideal opportunity for Aboriginal people to use their knowledge and skills, and participate in the new industrial society which was fast overwhelming them. It wasn't long, though, before more sophisticated operations reduced the need for Aboriginal workers.

Following the Second World War, chronic unemployment aggravated the problems in many Aboriginal communities. Deprived of their traditional lands, livelihoods and customs, many lost the ability—and even the will—to provide for themselves.

In response to strong, organized protests over deplorable social and economic conditions, the Canadian government recognized the importance of Aboriginal participation in the fishing industry. Since 1968, various programs have been put in place to encourage Aboriginal involvement, and help repair and upgrade vessels and equipment. Community development projects have helped improve Aboriginal well-being. But overall, the picture remains bleak.

After decades of dependence and no work, it's hard to overcome Aboriginal apathy and distrust of public authority. What's more, slow progress on comprehensive land claims settlements in British Columbia has increased frustration and resentment.

There is little public awareness of the history of Aboriginal oppression, of the land title issue on which Aboriginal demands are based, of how authoritarian and paternalistic administrative policies have stiffled self-direction and creative development. B.C.'s Aboriginal peoples, under treaty or not, have severely limited access to fish and wildlife resources. They believe that they can become self-reliant, and restore their social and economic well-being, through well-managed access to fish resources.

Protecting the Environment

The island of Moresby in the Queen Charlottes is the ancestral homeland of the Haida Nation. Since 1974, the Haida and local environmentalists have struggled to save the island's habitat from logging. Their cause has attracted a great deal of national and international attention and support. The campaign came to a climax in 1985, when Haida-led protesters blockaded logging roads on the island. More than 70 Aboriginal people were arrested.

Public opinion prompted Ottawa to act. A formal agreement between Ottawa and the province turned the island into a national park. But the day before it was to be signed, the agreement fell apart. While the Haida are not party to ongoing negotiations, they are concerned about the plan: they're happy that the island's ecology will be preserved, but are wary of the impact this kind of plan might have on their traditional hunting and fishing rights.

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Land Claims

The Nisga'a people of the Nass Valley have been active in seeking recognition of their land claim. In 1973, their activism led to a landmark split decision by the Supreme Court of Canada, a ruling which suggested that Aboriginal title may indeed be a legally valid concept. This Nisga'a or Calder case is generally credited with providing the impetus and political will that has, subsequently, given rise to the land claims process.

Current*Activity*

Self-Government, Sechelt Style

The Sechelt First Nation has had self-government since 1986, when the *Sechelt Indian Band Self-Government Act* was passed by Parliament. It's one example of legislation shaped to fit an Aboriginal community's needs. The Sechelt Nation has 33 parcels of land totaling more than 1,000 hectares north of Vancouver. Most of its 900 members live there.

Long before the Act came into force, the Sechelt First Nation earnestly pursued opportunities to manage its own affairs and assumed all possible powers under the *Indian Act*, including managing revenues, local taxes, and reserve and surrendered lands. Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, the Sechelt continued to press for greater control.

In 1984, at the Sechelt's request, DIAND set up a team to negotiate the details of a self-government agreement, which gives the Sechelt people various new powers within clearly defined parameters.

The community was set up as a legal entity with power to enter into contracts and agreements; acquire property; sell and dispose of property; and expend, invest and borrow money. The community can set up its own constitution to establish the terms of office of a governing council accountable to the electorate, a system of financial accountability, a membership code, specific legislative powers of the council and a process to amend the constitution.

The elected council can pass laws governing access to and residence on Sechelt lands; zoning and land use planning; expropriation for community purposes; use, construction, maintenance, repair and demolition of buildings; local taxation; occupants and tenants; administration and management of lands; and education, social welfare and health services.

A Unique Solution

Sechelt First Nation members overwhelmingly supported the self-government agreement and, in 1986, Bill C-93 was enacted by Parliament. The following year, the British Columbia Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a bill to give the Sechelt community municipal status.

In 1991, the federal and provincial governments accepted the Sechelt's comprehensive land claim for negotiation. Just over a year later, Canada,

British Columbia and the First Nations Summit established the British Columbia Treaty Commission (BCTC)—the keeper of a new six-stage process for treaty negotiations in the province. In 1994, the Sechelt decided to resume treaty negotiations under the new process and submitted its statement of intent to negotiate.

Negotiations are ongoing. In 1995, an agreement setting out the main issues for negotiation was signed. The Sechelt First Nation was the first in the province to reach this milestone.

In 1995, the federal government launched its policy framework to implement the inherent right of self-government. As a general principle, existing self-government agreements remain in effect. The federal government has agreed to explore issues related to constitutional protection of the self-government arrangements currently in place.

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British Columbia Claims Task Force

First Nation affairs made headlines again in the mid-1970s with rallies, sit-ins, and road and rail blockades. These highlighted poor conditions in Aboriginal communities and focused attention on the land question. During the 1980s, another priority emerged: to halt specific resource development projects in First Nation territories. In some cases, court injunctions suspended resource development pending the outcome of disputes over Aboriginal title. But the province continued to deny the existence of Aboriginal title, and declined to negotiate with First Nations. The resulting impasse was unsettling for everyone.

In the meantime, First Nation organizations continued to evolve. Forums, councils and organizations became active at the national and provincial level. Tribal councils sprang up across the province, most of them representing traditional tribal groups. In many cases, these tribal councils submitted formal land claims to the federal government. The demand for recognition of the inherent right to First Nation government came to the forefront of the Aboriginal agenda.

Growing public support for Aboriginal issues and a series of court decisions favouring Aboriginal people prompted the provincial government to become more responsive to Aboriginal concerns. The Ministry of Native Affairs was formed. In 1989, the Premier's Council on Native Affairs was created to meet with First Nations and prepare recommendations on a range of issues.

In 1990, a number of First Nation communities blockaded roads and railways. This was done to express solidarity with the Mohawk in Quebec, and to spotlight recognition of Aboriginal title and rights. The Premier's Council on Native Affairs recommended that the government establish a process by which Aboriginal land claims could be received and negotiated. In 1990, a tripartite task force was formed to develop this process.

Whatever the issue, it's clear that any new relationship must be achieved through fair negotiations—negotiations undertaken by First Nations, Canada and British Columbia as equal partners.

The Recommendations of the British Columbia Task Force

Here are some of the 19 recommendations made by the British Columbia Task Force.

- Build a relationship based on trust, respect and understanding.
- Allow each party to introduce any issue it deems significant at the negotiation table.
- Establish a British Columbia Treaty Commission to facilitate the negotiation process.
- The Commission should have a full-time chairperson and four commissioners: two appointed by First Nations, one each by the federal and provincial governments.
- Follow a six-stage process in negotiating treaties.
- This process should be open to all First Nations in British Columbia.
- Let First Nations resolve among themselves those issues related to overlapping traditional territories.
- The federal and provincial governments should start negotiations as soon as First Nations are ready.
- Non-Aboriginal interests should be represented at the negotiating table by the federal and provincial governments.
- Adequately fund the First Nation, Canadian and British Columbian negotiating teams.
- Let the Commission allocate funds to the First Nation.
- Let the parties develop ratification procedures.
- The Commission should provide advice and assistance in dispute resolution as agreed by the parties.

The federal government accepted all of the recommendations, and agreed to implement those directed at Ottawa. Its support hinges on provincial

participation and cost sharing: Canada is to contribute 70 percent of settlement costs, plus land and resources.

Moreover, the Government of Canada has proposed an amendment to the Constitution to entrench the right of Aboriginal self-government, which is now negotiated as part of land claims under current federal policy.

Nisga'a Agreement-in-Principle

In 1996, negotiators announced that they had reached an agreement-in-principle with the Nisga'a Nation. It's British Columbia's first modern-day treaty.

In essence, the agreement calls for a cash payment of $190 million. The Nisga'a get ownership of and self-government over 1,900 square kilometres of land in the Nass River Valley, and are entitled to surface and subsurface resources on these lands.

Here are the general provisions of the agreement.

- The Nisga'a retain their Aboriginal designation under the *Constitution Act*, 1982.
- They continue to be entitled to the same rights and benefits as other Canadian citizens.
- Their lands will no longer be considered reserve lands under the *Indian Act*.
- The Nisga'a government and its institutions will adhere to the terms of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.
- Jurisdiction over its citizens on its land will be phased in over time.
- Eventually, the *Indian Act* will no longer apply to the Nisga'a.
- All parties agree that the final agreement will provide certainty with respect to Nisga'a rights, title and obligations.
- The *Criminal Code of Canada* and other laws of general application will continue to apply.

Nisga'a Lands and Waters

The Nisga'a will own two types of land—Nisga'a lands and fee simple lands. Nisga'a lands will be communally owned. These will include the four Nisga'a villages: New Aiyansh (Gitlaxt'aamiks), Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City), Laxgalts'ap (Greenville), and Kincolith (Gingolx).

Fifty-six First Nation communities in the area will cease to be reserves and become Nisga'a lands. The Nisga'a will own both surface resources (including forests) and subsurface resources on those lands. Existing legal interests on Nisga'a lands, such as rights of way, angling and guide outfitter licences, and traplines will remain in force. The Nisga'a government will be able to set conditions on any new interests they grant in future.

Eighteen First Nation communities are located outside Nisga'a lands; their land is to become fee simple land, owned by the Nisga'a government but subject to provincial laws. An additional 15 parcels of fee simple land, totaling no more than 2.5 square kilometres, will be given to the Nisga'a for economic development.

Existing water licences remain in force. The Nisga'a are guaranteed enough water to meet their domestic, industrial and agricultural needs, subject to habitat conservation. There will be public access to Nisga'a lands for hunting, fishing and recreation, but the Nisga'a government can regulate access to ensure public safety, to protect environmental, cultural or historic features, and to protect habitat. The federal and provincial governments will be able to acquire Nisga'a lands for public purposes, subject to fair compensation.

Fishing and Hunting

Conservation of fish stocks is the primary consideration. The Nisga'a get an annual treaty-entitlement of salmon, about 18 percent of the total allowable Canadian Nass River catch. The Nisga'a will be able to sell their salmon, subject to general laws.

They will receive an allocation of steelhead for domestic purposes, if stocks can support it. They will also receive an annual entitlement for non-salmon species, such as halibut, eulachon and shellfish. This is for domestic use only, and can't be sold.

The agreement gives the Nisga'a $11.5 million toward the purchase of vessels and licences. A wildlife management area will be established within which the Nisga'a can hunt wildlife for domestic purposes, subject to conservation needs. A wildlife committee, with equal representation from the Nisga'a and the province, will make recommendations to the provincial government on wildlife management activities and Nisga'a hunting. The First Nation may also harvest migratory birds according to an international convention and laws of general application.

Nisga'a Governments

The Nisga'a will have an umbrella government and four village governments. These governments can make laws concerning culture and language,

employment, public works, regulation of traffic and transportation, land use, solemnization of marriage, and more.

People who reside on Nisga'a lands, but who are not members of the First Nation, will be consulted about (and may seek a review of) decisions that affect them directly, and will be able to participate in the activities of elected bodies the responsibilities of which affect them.

The Nisga'a government will be able to provide full policing services on their lands using police academy graduates. Police must meet provincial standards for training, qualifications and professional standards. The government can establish a court that will have jurisdiction over Nisga'a laws on its lands.

The Nisga'a government will continue to receive money from the government to provide services at levels generally comparable to those available in the region.

The new government can tax Nisga'a citizens on its land. The Nisga'a government will be tax-exempt in respect to its activities, like other governments in Canada.

Nisga'a citizens will have to pay provincial and federal taxes (after a transitional period of eight years for sales taxes and 12 years for others, such as income).

The Royal B.C. Museum and the Canadian Museum of Civilization will return a significant portion of their collections of Nisga'a artifacts to the First Nation.

If disputes arise over how the treaty should be applied, and mediation fails, the B.C. Supreme Court will make a decision.

Existing legal interests on Nisga'a lands, such as rights of way, angling and guide outfitter licences, and traplines will remain in force.

This agreement-in-principle is now ratified and signed by all parties. They are now negotiating a final agreement.

Other Recent Activities

More than two dozen framework agreements have been signed, and more than two dozen more First Nations are engaged in agreement-in-principle negotiations.

List of British Columbia First Nations

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
684 Adams Lake	Salishan	Shuswap*
659 Ahousaht	Wakashan	Nootka
558 Aitchelitz	Salishan	Cowichan**
709 Alexandria	Athapaskan	Chilcotin
710 Alexis Creek	Athapaskan	Chilcotin
685 Ashcroft	Salishan	Shuswap
640 Beecher Bay	Salishan	Songish
547 Blueberry River First Nation	Athapaskan	Beaver
686 Bonaparte	Salishan	Shuswap
700 Boothroyd	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
701 Boston Bar First Nation	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk

*Shuswap also refers to Secwepemc.

**Cowichan also refers to Sto:lo.

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
590 Bridge River	Salishan (Interior Salish)	Shuswap
619 Burns Lake	Athapaskan	Carrier
549 Burrard	Salishan	Halkomelem
622 Campbell River	Salishan	Kwakiutl*
713 Canim Lake	Salishan	Shuswap
723 Canoe Creek	Salishan	Shuswap
623 Cape Mudge	Salishan	Kwakiutl
591 Cayoose Creek	Salishan	Lillooet**
583 Chawathil	Salishan	Cowichan
584 Cheam	Coast Salish	Cowichan
559 Chehalis	Coast Salish	Cowichan
641 Chemainus First Nation	Coast Salish	Cowichan
620 Cheslatta Carrier Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier
693 Coldwater	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk

*Kwakiutl also refers to Kwakwaka'wakw.

**Lillooet also refers to Stl'atl'imx.

List
British Columbia First Nations

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
684 Adams Lake	Salishan	Shuswap*
659 Ahousaht	Wakashan	Nootka
558 Aitchelitz	Salishan	Cowichan**
709 Alexandria	Athapaskan	Chilcotin
710 Alexis Creek	Athapaskan	Chilcotin
685 Ashcroft	Salishan	Shuswap
640 Beecher Bay	Salishan	Songish
547 Blueberry River First Nation	Athapaskan	Beaver
686 Bonaparte	Salishan	Shuswap
700 Boothroyd	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
701 Boston Bar First Nation	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk

*Shuswap also refers to Secwepemc.
**Cowichan also refers to Sto:lo.

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
590 Bridge River	Salishan (Interior Salish)	Shuswap
619 Burns Lake	Athapaskan	Carrier
549 Burrard	Salishan	Halkomelem
622 Campbell River	Salishan	Kwakiutl*
713 Canim Lake	Salishan	Shuswap
723 Canoe Creek	Salishan	Shuswap
623 Cape Mudge	Salishan	Kwakiutl
591 Cayoose Creek	Salishan	Lillooet**
583 Chawathil	Salishan	Cowichan
584 Cheam	Coast Salish	Cowichan
559 Chehalis	Coast Salish	Cowichan
641 Chemainus First Nation	Coast Salish	Cowichan
620 Cheslatta Carrier Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier
693 Coldwater	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk

*Kwakiutl also refers to Kwakwaka'wakw.

**Lillooet also refers to Stl'atl'imx.

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
604 Columbia Lake	Kootenayan	Kootenay
624 Comox	Coast Salish	Comox
694 Cook's Ferry	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
642 Cowichan	Salishan	Cowichan
643 Lake Cowichan First Nation	Salishan	Nootka
635 Da'naxda'xw First Nation	Wakashan	Kwikiutl
544 Dene Tsaa Tse K'nai First Nation	Nahani	Nahani
662 Ditidaht	Wakashan	Nootka
548 Doig River	Athapaskan	Beaver
561 Douglas	Salishan	Lillooet
634 Ehattesaht	Wakashan	Nootka
711 Esketemc	Salishan	Shuswap
644 Esquimalt	Salishan	Songish
543 Fort Nelson First Nation	Athapaskan	Nahani

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
592 Fountain	Salishan	Lillooet
671 Gingolx First Nation	Tsimshian	Niska
531 Gitanmaax	Tsimshian	Gitksan
537 Gitanyow	Tsimshian	Gitksan
677 Gitlakdamix	Tsimshian	Niska
535 Gitsegukla	Tsimshian	Gitksan
536 Gitwangak	Tsimshian	Gitksan
679 Gitwinksihlkw Village Government	Tsimshian	Gitksan
533 Glen Vowell	Tsimshian	Gitksan
724 Gwa'Sala-Nakwaxda'xw	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
627 Gwawaenuk Tribe	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
534 Hagwilget Village	Athapaskan	Carrier
645 Halalt	Salishan	Cowichan
546 Halfway River First Nation	Athapaskan	Beaver

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
604 Columbia Lake	Kootenayan	Kootenay
624 Comox	Coast Salish	Comox
694 Cook's Ferry	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
642 Cowichan	Salishan	Cowichan
643 Lake Cowichan First Nation	Salishan	Nootka
635 Da'naxda'xw First Nation	Wakashan	Kwikiutl
544 Dene Tsaa Tse K'nai First Nation	Nahani	Nahani
662 Ditidaht	Wakashan	Nootka
548 Doig River	Athapaskan	Beaver
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634 Ehattesaht	Wakashan	Nootka
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537 Gitanyow	Tsimshian	Gitksan
677 Gitlakdamix	Tsimshian	Niska
535 Gitsegukla	Tsimshian	Gitksan
536 Gitwangak	Tsimshian	Gitksan
679 Gitwinksihlkw Village Government	Tsimshian	Gitksan
533 Glen Vowell	Tsimshian	Gitksan
724 Gwa'Sala-Nakwaxda'xw	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
627 Gwawaenuk Tribe	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
534 Hagwilget Village	Athapaskan	Carrier
645 Halalt	Salishan	Cowichan
546 Halfway River First Nation	Athapaskan	Beaver

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
675 Hartley Bay	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
538 Heiltsuk	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
661 Hesquiaht	Wakashan	Nootka
703 High Bar	Salishan	Shuswap
552 Homalco	Salishan	Comox
664 Hupacasath First Nation	Wakashan	Nooktka
663 Huu-ay-aht First Nations	Wakashan	Nooktka
683 Iskut	Tahltan	Tahltan
688 Kamloops	Salishan	Shuswap
704 Kanaka Bar	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
563 Katzie	Salishan	Cowichan
638 Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/che:k:tlestet'h' First Nation	Wakashan	Nootka
532 Kispiox	Tsimshian	Gitksan
676 Kitamaat	Wakashan	Kwakiutl

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
540 Kitasoo	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
672 Kitkatla	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
680 Kitselas	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
681 Kitsumkalum	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
553 Klahoose First Nation	Salishan	Comox
721 Kluskus	Athapaskan	Chilicotin
610 Kwadacha	Sekani	Sekani
626 Kwakiutl	Wakashan	Kwakwaka'wakw/ Kwakw'ala
564 Kwantlen First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
580 Kwan-kwan-A-Pilt	Salishan	Cowichan
560 Kwayhquitlum First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
628 Kwiakah	Wakashan	Kwakuitl
625 Kwicksutaineuk-ah-kwaw-ah-mish	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
579 Lakahahmen	Salishan	Cowichan

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
675 Hartley Bay	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
538 Heiltsuk	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
661 Hesquiaht	Wakashan	Nootka
703 High Bar	Salishan	Shuswap
552 Homalco	Salishan	Comox
664 Hupacasath First Nation	Wakashan	Nooktka
663 Huu-ay-aht First Nations	Wakashan	Nooktka
683 Iskut	Tahltan	Tahltan
688 Kamloops	Salishan	Shuswap
704 Kanaka Bar	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
563 Katzie	Salishan	Cowichan
638 Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/che:k:tlestet'h' First Nation	Wakashan	Nootka
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First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
540 Kitasoo	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
672 Kitkatla	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
680 Kitselas	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
681 Kitsumkalum	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
553 Klahoose First Nation	Salishan	Comox
721 Kluskus	Athapaskan	Chilicotin
610 Kwadacha	Sekani	Sekani
626 Kwakiutl	Wakashan	Kwakwaka'wakw/ Kwakw'ala
564 Kwantlen First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
580 Kwan-kwan-A-Pilt	Salishan	Cowichan
560 Kwayhquitlum First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
628 Kwiakah	Wakashan	Kwakuitl
625 Kwicksutaineuk-ah-kwaw-ah-mish	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
579 Lakahahmen	Salishan	Cowichan

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
678 Lakalzap	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
607 Lake Babine Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier
674 Lax kw'alaams	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
611 Lheidli T'enneh	Athapaskan	Carrier
689 Little Shuswap Lake	Salishan	Shuswap
606 Lower Kootenay	Kootenayan	Kootenay
695 Lower Nicola	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
598 Lower Similkameen	Salishan	Okanagan
646 Lyackson	Salishan	Cowichan
705 Lytton	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
647 Malahat First NAtion	Salishan	Cowichan
629 Mamalilikulla	Wakashan	Kwakuitl
565 Matsqui	Salishan	Cowichan
673 Metlakatla	Tsimshian	Tsimshian

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
618 Mcleod Lake	Athapaskan	Carrier
530 Moricetown	Athapaskan	Carrier
557 Mount Currie	Salishan	Lillooet
630 Mowachaht/ Muchalaht	Wakashan	Nootka
550 Musqueam	Salishan	Cowichan
612 Nadleh Whuten	Athapaskan	Carrier
614 Nak'azdli	Athapaskan	Carrier
631 Namgis First Nation	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
649 Nanoose First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
720 Nazko	Athapaskan	Chilcotin
726 Nee-Tahi-Buhn	Athapaskan	Carrier
690 Neskonlith	Salishan	Shuswap
566 New Westminster	Salishan (Coast Salish)	Salishan
696 Nicomen	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
678 Lakalzap	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
607 Lake Babine Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier
674 Lax kw'alaams	Tsimshian	Tsimshian
611 Lheidli T'enneh	Athapaskan	Carrier
689 Little Shuswap Lake	Salishan	Shuswap
606 Lower Kootenay	Kootenayan	Kootenay
695 Lower Nicola	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
598 Lower Similkameen	Salishan	Okanagan
646 Lyackson	Salishan	Cowichan
705 Lytton	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
647 Malahat First NAtion	Salishan	Cowichan
629 Mamalilikulla	Wakashan	Kwakuitl
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557 Mount Currie	Salishan	Lillooet
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612 Nadleh Whuten	Athapaskan	Carrier
614 Nak'azdli	Athapaskan	Carrier
631 Namgis First Nation	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
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690 Neskonlith	Salishan	Shuswap
566 New Westminster	Salishan (Coast Salish)	Salishan
696 Nicomen	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
699 Nooaitch	Salishan	Nootka
691 North Thompson	Salishan	Shuswap
556 N'Quatqua	Salishan	Lillooet
639 Nuchatlaht	Wakashan	Nootka
539 Nuxalk Nation	Bella Coola	Bella Coola
616 Okanagan	Salishan	Okanagan
669 Old Massett Village Council	Haida	Haida
621 Omineca (refer to 725 Wet'suwet'en)	Athapaskan	Carrier/Wet'suwet'en
692 Oregon Jack Creek	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
596 Osoyoos	Salishan	Okanagan
541 Oweekeno	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
658 Pacheedaht First Nation	Wakashan	Nootka
652 Pauquachin	Salishan	Songish
594 Pavilion	Salishan	Lillooet

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
650 Penelakut	Salishan	Cowichan
597 Penticton	Salishan	Okanagan
586 Peters	Salishan	Cowichan
585 Popkum	Salishan	Cowichan
651 Qualicum First Nation	Salishan	Puntlatch
633 Quatsino	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
715 Red Bluff	Athapaskan	Carrier
602 St. Mary's	Kootenayan	Kootenay
615 Saik'uz First Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier
567 Samahquam	Salishan	Lillooet
542 Saulteau First Nation	Algonkian	Ojibway
568 Scowlitz	Salishan	Cowichan
581 Seabird Island	Salishan	Cowichan
551 Sechelt	Salishan	Sechelt

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
699 Nooaitch	Salishan	Nootka
691 North Thompson	Salishan	Shuswap
556 N'Quatqua	Salishan	Lillooet
639 Nuchatlaht	Wakashan	Nootka
539 Nuxalk Nation	Bella Coola	Bella Coola
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585 Popkum	Salishan	Cowichan
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567 Samahquam	Salishan	Lillooet
542 Saulteau First Nation	Algonkian	Ojibway
568 Scowlitz	Salishan	Cowichan
581 Seabird Island	Salishan	Cowichan
551 Sechelt	Salishan	Sechelt

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
569 Semiahmoo	Salishan	Semiahmoo
595 Seton Lake	Salishan	Lillooet
698 Shackan	Salishan	Nylakyapamuk
605 Shuswap	Salishan	Shuswap
587 Shxw'ow'hamel First Nation	Salishan (Coast Salish)	Salishan
706 Siska	Salishan	Nylakyapamuk
582 Skawahlook	Salishan	Cowichan
687 Skeetchestn	Salishan	Shuswap
670 Skidegate	Haida	Haida
562 Skookum Chuck	Salishan	Lillooet
571 Skowkale	Salishan	Cowichan
707 Skuppah	Salishan	Nylakyapamuk
573 Skwah	Coast Salish	Cowichan
570 Skway	Salishan	Cowichan

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
554 Sliammon	Salishan	Cowichan
648 Snuneymuxw First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
716 Soda Creek	Salishan	Shuswap
656 Songhees Fisrt Nation	Salishan	Songish
572 Soowahlie	Salishan	Cowichan
600 Spallumcheen	Salishan	Shuswap
708 Spuzzum	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
555 Squamish	Salishan	Squamish
574 Squiala First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
613 Stellat'en First Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier
717 Stone	Athapaskan	Chilcotin
578 Sumas First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
682 Tahltan	Athapaskan	Tahltan
608 Takla Lake First Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
569 Semiahmoo	Salishan	Semiahmoo
595 Seton Lake	Salishan	Lillooet
698 Shackan	Salishan	Nylakyapamuk
605 Shuswap	Salishan	Shuswap
587 Shxw'ow'hamel First Nation	Salishan (Coast Salish)	Salishan
706 Siska	Salishan	Nylakyapamuk
582 Skawahlook	Salishan	Cowichan
687 Skeetchestn	Salishan	Shuswap
670 Skidegate	Haida	Haida
562 Skookum Chuck	Salishan	Lillooet
571 Skowkale	Salishan	Cowichan
707 Skuppah	Salishan	Nylakyapamuk
573 Skwah	Coast Salish	Cowichan
570 Skway	Salishan	Cowichan

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554 Sliammon	Salishan	Cowichan
648 Snuneymuxw First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
716 Soda Creek	Salishan	Shuswap
656 Songhees Fisrt Nation	Salishan	Songish
572 Soowahlie	Salishan	Cowichan
600 Spallumcheen	Salishan	Shuswap
708 Spuzzum	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
555 Squamish	Salishan	Squamish
574 Squiala First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
613 Stellat'en First Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier
717 Stone	Athapaskan	Chilcotin
578 Sumas First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
682 Tahltan	Athapaskan	Tahltan
608 Takla Lake First Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
593 T'It'kit	Salishan	Lillooet
660 Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations	Wakashan	Nootka
632 Tlatlasikwala	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
617 Tl'azt'en Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier
712 Tl'etinqox-t'in Government Office	Athapaskan	Chilcotin
637 Tlowitsis Tribe	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
603 Tobacco Plains	Kootenayan	Kootenay
718 Toosey	Athapaskan	Chilicotin
666 Toquaht	Wakashan	Nootka
653 Tsartlip	Salishan	Songish
636 Tsawataineuk	Wakashan	Kwakiutl
654 Tsawout First Nation	Salishan	Songish
577 Tsawwassen First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
609 Tsay Keh Dene	Athapaskan	Carrier

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
665 Tseshaht	Wakashan	Nootka
655 Tseycum	Salishan	Songish
657 T'Sou-ke First Nation	Salishan	Songish
575 Tzeachten	Salishan	Cowichan
667 Uchucklesaht	Wakashan	Nootka
668 Ucluelet First Nation	Wakashan	Nootka
722 Ulkatcho	Athapaskan	Chilcotin
588 Union Bar	Salishan	Cowichan
697 Upper Nicola	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
599 Upper Similkameen	Salishan	Okanagan
601 Westbank First Nation	Salishan	Okanagan
545 West Moberly First Nation	Athapaskan	Beaver
725 Wet'suwet'en First Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier/Wet'suwet'en
702 Whispering Pines/ Clinto	Salishan (Interior Salish)	Shuswap/Salishan

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593 T'It'kit	Salishan	Lillooet
660 Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations	Wakashan	Nootka
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657 T'Sou-ke First Nation	Salishan	Songish
575 Tzeachten	Salishan	Cowichan
667 Uchucklesaht	Wakashan	Nootka
668 Ucluelet First Nation	Wakashan	Nootka
722 Ulkatcho	Athapaskan	Chilcotin
588 Union Bar	Salishan	Cowichan
697 Upper Nicola	Salishan	Ntlakyapamuk
599 Upper Similkameen	Salishan	Okanagan
601 Westbank First Nation	Salishan	Okanagan
545 West Moberly First Nation	Athapaskan	Beaver
725 Wet'suwet'en First Nation	Athapaskan	Carrier/Wet'suwet'en
702 Whispering Pines/ Clinton	Salishan (Interior Salish)	Shuswap/Salishan

First Nations	Linguistic Group	Language
719 Williams Lake	Salishan	Shuswap
714 Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Government	Athapaskan	Chilicotin
576 Yakweakwioose	Salishan	Cowichan
589 Yale First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
728 Yekooche	Athapaskan	Carrier

NOTE: The First Nation listing can be found in the Indian Register, DIAND, 1999. Other demographics and statistical data are available through the regional DIAND office.

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714 Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Government	Athapaskan	Chilicotin
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589 Yale First Nation	Salishan	Cowichan
728 Yekooche	Athapaskan	Carrier

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